



January 2016

ARLANDRIA

ARLANDRIA ACTION PLAN IMPLEMENTATION ACTIVITIES

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Upcoming Events:

- ◆ AlexRenew Community Meeting, Feb 4, 7:00pm, Cora Kelly
- ◆ Arlandria Advisory Group / Joint 4MR Task Force Meeting, March 2016 (TBD)

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In 2003, the City adopted a *Long-Term Vision and Action Plan for the Arlandria Neighborhood* (Action Plan). This newsletter provides a summary of recent implementation activities and project highlights.

Four Mile Run

In December 2015, the City completed the Four Mile Run Wetland Restoration project.

A major objective of the Four Mile Run Master Plan is to reestablish the vegetation that once lined the stream and existed in wetlands areas, but has since disappeared or been overwhelmed by invasive species. The Four Mile Run Wetlands Restoration plays a prominent role in regional efforts to protect the Potomac River and the endangered Chesapeake Bay by restoring the diverse habitat and natural cycles that support life in and along these waterways.

The Restoration project restored the historic 2-acre tidal wetland where the water levels



fluctuate with the daily tidal cycle along Four Mile Run. Wetlands were once common along all the tidal tributaries and protected shorelines of the Potomac River, but many tidal wetlands have been lost to urban and suburban shoreline development. The upland trail serves as a buffer between the tidal wetland and the existing forested wetland.

Wetlands are important to both wildlife and humans and provide a connection between aquatic and terrestrial habitats that are important to fish and aquatic organisms as well as many birds and terrestrial animals.

Tidal wetlands are important nurseries and foraging areas for fish, waterfowl

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Hume Springs Park and Playground Reopens

Hume Springs Park, 100 Dale Street, reopened on Saturday, October 31st, with a ribbon cutting ceremony and kid friendly games and activities. Park improvements include new play equipment, fencing and an enhanced entrance, fitness equipment, a water fountain, benches, picnic tables, gardens, and additional trees. The asphalt area has been painted with bright, cheery colors and designated as a stroller parking area. It will remain a flat hardscape so that it can continue to be used as event space for neighborhood gatherings. The existing light fixtures will be upgraded with energy efficient light bulbs. In addition to using less energy, these bulbs have a longer life span and will reduce maintenance and replacement costs.

These improvements were made possible by the City's partnership with RunningBrooke (see *page 3*) and the generosity of over a hundred volunteers and sponsors. Other partners in the project included: Teva Respiratory, Rebuilding Together Alexandria, The Brickman Group, Simpson Development, the Rotary Club of Alexandria, Rosemont Landscaping & Lawncare, the Rotary Club of Carshalton Park-England, the Hume Springs Neighborhood Association and over 400 generous donors.



4MR continued from front page

and other birds, reptiles and mammals. Wetlands also benefit humans by improving water quality and storing floodwaters. Tidal wetlands can be divided into different plant zones based on fluctuating water depths. This restored wetland includes a low marsh zone and a high marsh zone and is surrounded by an upland meadow.

Low Marsh

The low marsh zone is typically flooded for more than ½ of the day by water up to several feet deep. This extensive inundation limits the diversity of plants that can grow in this zone. Common low marsh plants, such as the yellow pond-lily (*Nuphar advena*) and the arrow arum (*Peltandra virginica*), provide cover for juvenile and adult fish and other aquatic species. The ten-foot tall, emergent grass - wild rice (*Zizania aquatica*) - was an important food crop for Native Americans and remains an important food source for water fowl. The prolonged and deep inundation by tidal waters allows the low marsh vegetation to take up nutrients and trap sediments from the flood waters.

High Marsh

The high marsh is flooded less than half the day by water that is typically less than one-foot deep. The vegetation community is composed of many species that form a dense cover. Grasses, sedges and rushes, such as rice cut grass (*Leersia oryzoides*), soft rush (*Juncus effusus*), woolgrass (*Scirpus cyperinus*) and three-square (*Schoenoplectus pungens*) are common in the high marsh, as are herbaceous flowering plants such as rose mallow (*Hibiscus laevis*), broadleaf arrowhead (*Sagittaria latifolia*), and swamp milkweed (*Asclepias incarnata*). The diverse plant community provides habitat to many insects, amphibians, birds and other animals. The high marsh is not inundated for long periods, but the dense vegetation is efficient at capturing sediments and pollutants from floodwaters.

Upland Meadow

The upland meadow is a perennial herb community that is not regularly flooded. It provides terrestrial habitat utilized by many of the same species that live in the wetland; frogs forage in the meadow and turtles nest here. A mix of grass species and flowering herbs, such as black-eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia hirta*) and goldenrods (*Solidago* spp.), provide foraging and nesting habitat for many song birds, supply nectar and act as larval hosts for native pollinators, and create cover habitat for other wildlife. The meadow vegetation also provides soil stabilization and erosion control.

A dedication ceremony will be held in Spring 2016 when the wetland plantings have grown and are visible. The pink flags in the wetlands will remain on site for a year to deter geese as the plants establish. City staff is currently working on the design of a bridge to connect the wetlands, where the trail currently ends, across the creek to the ball fields.

Transportation Improvements

New Bus Shelters

The shelters located on Mt. Vernon and Executive Avenues are the highest priority on the City's replacement schedule. The Department of Project Implementation (DPI) is leading this project which will initially replace approximately 20 Metro bus (WMATA-owned) shelters citywide. The Invitation to Bid for shelters closed in November and the City made its recommendation for a vendor. Currently, the City is waiting for VDOT's approval of the selected bus shelter construction and installation vendor as FHWA funds are included with this project.



Bike Ped Master Plan

The City is drafting an update to the Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan based on an 18 month effort to develop a plan that creates a proposed bicycle network, pedestrian and bicycle recommendations and framework for implementing non-motorized policies and projects citywide.

The Community is invited to provide feedback on the draft plan by visiting [AlexEngage](http://www.engage.alexandriava.gov) (www.engage.alexandriava.gov). Comments received by **Sunday, January 31**, will inform the revised draft plan to be presented to the Transportation Commission, Planning Commission and Council later in the spring. The final plan will include an updated Pedestrian and Bicycle chapter of the City's Transportation Master Plan, and accompanying supporting appendices. Detailed information regarding the plan and past planning efforts can be found by visiting the project website, alexandriava.gov/pedbikeplan. **Join the conversation at AlexEngage!**

Community Engagement & Involvement

Quality of Life Walk

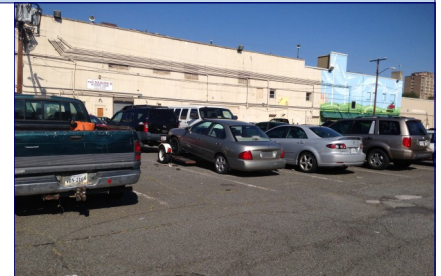
In July 2015, community members joined City staff for the Arlandria Quality of Life Walk.

This annual event is designed for staff and residents to survey the area and determine any needed improvements to the streetscape, signage, open spaces, and matters related to public health, safety and welfare.

The walk revealed a few issues requiring attention in the Mt. Vernon Village Center parking lot. The Alexandria Police Department (APD) met with community members and the owner of the Mt. Vernon Shopping Center to address the issues. The area has since been cleaned up including the removal of abandoned vehicles and restriping of parking spaces. Going forward, all Bruce Street residents parking in the lot will be required to display a parking pass. APD secured a tag enforcement and boot authorization from the property owner which allows APD enforcement.

Staff distributed information regarding sign regulations to local businesses and made note of a number of issues. The City is in the process of reviewing and updating its sign ordinance anticipated for completion later in 2016. At that time, and in the interim if needed, staff will work with property owners to resolve any ongoing issues.

Some other issues identified during the walk that have been resolved include the failing foundation under a traffic light at the corner of Mt. Vernon and Executive Dr., sidewalk repair in multiple locations, street tree attention, and litter pick up. Crosswalk restriping will be assessed in the spring 2016.



Mt. Vernon Village Center lot, before



Mt. Vernon Village Center lot, after

Hume Springs and Partnership with RunningBrooke

On June 10, 2015, RunningBrooke presented the Alexandria City Council with a contribution of \$80,000 to revitalize Hume Springs Park. RunningBrooke raised funds for the Hume Springs project through major events such as Spring2ACTion and a sponsorship from the Alexandria Marketing Fund for the Alexandria Running Festival.

On September 11 and 19, 2015, RunningBrooke and Rebuilding Together Alexandria hosted volunteer events to facilitate the renovations. Volunteers removed outgrown shrubbery, planted trees and gardens, installed safety surfacing and signage, assembled benches, spread mulch and painted graphics on asphalt areas to stimulate creativity and learning.

RunningBrooke funds innovative local charities and programs that help ensure young people in our community are healthy, active and ready to succeed in school and life. *For more information about RunningBrooke and how to get involved, visit www.runningbrooke.org. For additional information about the park and its improvements, download the [Neighborhood Parks Draft Improvement Plans](#) or visit www.alexandriava.gov/recreation.*



Four Mile Run Market Moves Indoors

The Four Mile Run Farmers & Artisans Market (4MR Market) became the 4MR Winter Market following the 2015 Thanksgiving holiday. The winter market will be held indoors at the Four Mile Run Park Conservatory Center (4109 Mt. Vernon Avenue) on Sundays, 9am - 1pm, from now until April. At that time, the market will continue outside. For more information, visit www.4mrmarket.org.



Community Engagement continued from page 3

Four Mile Run Pump Station Educational Fence Information Meeting

Alexandria Renew Enterprises will host a Four Mile Run Pump Station Educational Fence Information meeting on Thursday, February 11th from 7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at Cora Kelly Elementary School. All interested community members are invited to attend.

The purpose of the meeting is to review the plans for the educational fence to be installed at the site. The plans include ideas and feedback AlexRenew has received during previous community meetings about the pump station renovation. The fence plans include interactive elements that inform community members about the importance of water stewardship and what AlexRenew does to ensure the health of the community and water environment.

If you have any questions about the meeting, please contact Hans Bailey, Senior Customer Service Manager at Alexandria Renew Enterprises, 703.549.3381, x2206.

Development Project Updates

Mt. Vernon Village Center, 3809-3839 Mount Vernon Ave

The site was approved for redevelopment by City Council in December 2011 for a 53,000ft mixed-use development with 478 residential units, retail, underground parking, and associated infrastructure and streetscape improvements. The applicant received an extension on the approval in May 2015, which will be valid through 2018. The owner has indicated that another option to development may be to pursue re-tenanting the property.



Four Mile Run Pump Station, 3650 Commonwealth Avenue

Construction is ongoing at the Alexandria Renew Enterprises site for the upgrades to the existing pump station. The project is on track to be completed by the end of January 2016 and will include a small addition to the existing building, streetscape improvements along Commonwealth Avenue (including a new sidewalk and landscaping) and a new decorative/educational fence around the perimeter of the site. The fence will include educational signage and public art around the perimeter of the site (see above). For more information, visit the project website: www.alexrenewfmrps.com.

Jackson Crossing, 120 East Reed Avenue

Jackson Crossing is AHC's first affordable apartment community in Alexandria, VA. Construction on the 78-unit building is nearing completion and leasing is now underway. The apartment complex includes one, two and three-bedroom apartments and serves families earning 60% or less of the area median income (AMI). The City Council approved the new affordable housing project in January 2013. This community provides underground



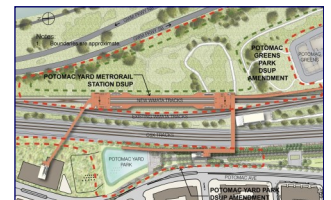
parking for residents, a rooftop patio, onsite management, and community space.

Oakville Triangle / Route 1 Corridor Plan

On Saturday, October 17, 2015, City Council unanimously approved the Planning Commission recommendation to adopt the Oakville Triangle/Route 1 Corridor Vision Plan and Urban Design Standards & Guidelines. The Plan establishes a long-term vision and framework for the planning area by addressing future infrastructure, land uses, building heights, design standards, open space and affordable housing, and is intended to guide public and private investment. On January 23rd, Council will consider a zoning text and map amendment for a Coordinated Development District, the zoning that implements the Plan's vision for an urban mixed-use community.

Potomac Yard Metrorail Station

In the fall of 2015, the City embarked on a community process to get input on a conceptual design for the proposed Metrorail Station at Potomac Yard. The station will be located along the Yellow and Blue Lines between the Braddock Road and Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport stations, and will be the second infill station in the Metrorail system.



WMATA and the City are developing the design-build documents for the Metrorail station. Community meetings and other opportunities for engagement are being held to solicit public input. For information on how to get involved, visit www.alexandriava.gov/potomacyard.

For more information on these development projects, please contact Gary Wagner, Planning & Zoning, 703.746.3818, gary.wagner@alexandriava.gov.

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